



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **TWO SENTENCED FOR DRUG AND WEAPONS CHARGES RELATED TO POT CULTIVATION IN TONTO NATIONAL FOREST**

PHOENIX— Two men have been sentenced for their roles in a conspiracy to cultivate over 1,000 marijuana plants in the Tonto National Forest in 2006.

Alejandro Mendoza-Angiano, 20, of the Republic of Mexico, was sentenced on June 25 to 204 months in federal prison for Cultivation of More than 1,000 Marijuana Plants on Federal Land and Brandishing a Firearm During and in Relation to a Crime of Violence, to wit: Assault on a United States Forestry Service Officer. A co-defendant, Manuel Sanchez-Gonzalez, 29, was sentenced on May 21 to 46 months in prison for Cultivation of 1,000 or more marijuana plants on National Forest lands. Both men pleaded guilty to the charges earlier this year.

Mendoza-Angiano and Sanchez-Gonzales were cultivating more than 1,000 marijuana plants in the Maple Springs Draw area of the Tonto National Forest in October 2006. Mendoza-Angiano was charged with using a .223 caliber Ruger Mini-14 assault rifle during and in relation to the marijuana cultivation activities as well as to threaten or intimidate a United States Forest Service Officer who was investigating the marijuana cultivation crimes on October 22, 2006.

Robin Poague, Assistant Special Agent in Charge for the Southwest Region of the Forest Service, stated: "We take incidents where employees or the public are threatened and assaulted very seriously. People who cultivate marijuana on public lands will be dealt with harshly."

The investigation was conducted by the United States Forest Service, the Gila County Sheriff's Department, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, and the Arizona Department of Public Safety. The prosecution was handled by Glenn McCormick, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-06-0993-PHX  
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